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DISPATCH NO. ~~HGG-A-1167~~

2003

~~SECRET~~ PBSUCCESS RYBAT

CLASSIFICATION

MAY 28 1954

TO LINCOLN

DATE:

FROM : Chief of Station, Guatemala []

INFO: CHIEF, WHD

SUBJECT: GENERAL— K-Program-Operational

SPECIFIC— Vindication of the Basic Concept

Enclosed for receiving stations is one copy of a document
prepared by Graham L. PAGE on above subject.

[Clara M. Heagey]

Enclosure: as noted

28 May 1954

CMH/cmh

Distribution:

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CLASSIFICATION

20 May 1954

K-Program

Subject:

Vindication of Basic Concept

1. To re-state what now must have become obvious, K-Program will never furnish you with a workable substitute or alternative to PBSuccess. As pointed out in the basic paper, the underlying concept of K-Program is embodied in PBSuccess. Any results attained thus far can be attributed to the inherent persuasiveness of an action program backed by the United States and presentable in terms of a competently directed resistance organization in being which has all the logistic ~~support~~ support it requires. Do away with all that and the indigenous resistance potential, which to a very large extent seems to reside in the minds rather than in the wills of the people, will no longer be realizeable. [] is a case in point. Despite his vocal misgivings about CALLIGERIS and altho he dreads the prospect of prolonged civil strife, is subconsciously at least subordinating himself to the strategic concept of PBSuccess. It is of the very greatest importance that in your assessment of the accomplishments and prospects of K-Program you do not indulge any wishful illusions as to its independent viability. The situation in ? Guatemala has been allowed to go beyond the point where a conspiracy not directed and sustained from the outside has still an even remote chance of success. The leadership of the regime is much too firmly entrenched and conceivably communist control is lodged in too many of its vital organs as to permit of a revolution from the top. [] is convinced that the removal of the three leaders of the Armed Forces: Arbenz, Sanchez and Diaz, would ~~create~~ create a situation affording him and his associates and opportunity to overthrow the regime on palace level. In his opinion any communist uprising could and would easily be quelled by the Army. We are inclined to doubt whether even in the most favorable of circumstances the

cancer of communist penetration can be removed without the drastic surgery of a civilian uprising.

2. As you well realize , except for a recent briefing by NUTTING, we have been left pretty much in the dark as to developments on the home front. Even a painstaking exegesis of your policy cables does not permit any reliable inferences whether you are still operating under the aegis of a "flickering green light". We trust that in denying us more than a few crumbs from the table you are prompted by a desire to save us the anguish of vacillation. By the same token you will appreciate that it is not easy to fit [] and at a later date possibly SMILAX, into a strategic concept which by now we remember in blurred outline only. Operational guidance provided by Lincoln has been good , but not good enough. In developing [] as an example, we cannot confine ourselves to purely notional gambits. Security permitting, we should be able to provide him with a fairly accurate estimate of things to come. Once SMILAX has been enrolled, factual inaccuracies could prove fatal to the operation, [] In order to cope with this and kindred problems, you may wish to consider the inauguration of a weekly news letter to keep us abreast of important developments. Especially in the field of KUHOOK events, there are painful gaps in our information, compounded by the fact that in many instances instructions to the field ignore the established tenets of English usage. Since we are not read in on the overall picture, the prevailing and probably completely unfounded impression is that the KUHOOK program is badly floundering and way behind schedule. We are naturally concerned about developments in Honduras which for all we may know may have played havoc with our logistics. We have of course been putting on a bold front, pointing out that Guatemalan interference in the domestic affairs of Honduras merely reflects the regime's exclusive preoccupation with the "invasion" contingency. All this, however, is avowedly conjecture and may be demonstrably poor conjecture.

3. Your latest instructions regarding [] have been noted. In line with your request we propose to undertake further attempts at reconciling [] to the role of CALLIGERIS. However, it should be pointed out that the existing animosity hardly constitutes a major stumbling block in the case of [] It remains to be seen how strongly SMILAX feels on the subject. In terms of effective military strength, STANDEL-16 should be considered a major asset. As pointed out before, he may or may not be prepared to subordinate himself to CALLIGERIS. This could probably be determined if you consider it an important factor. Whereas in our deliberations with [] the raising of political, post-liberation issues has thus far been avoided, you should not gain the impression that those issues have been laid to rest. As a matter of fact, we anticipate that SMILAX will have some very definite ideas on the subject. We do not know how large STANDEL-16 looms in KUHOOK planning. If he is considered a pivotal factor, a special operation could be build around him, designed to develop any independent military potential he may have. During the initial phase, transactions would have to be conducted through [] but presumably direct contacts between ESQUIRE and STANDEL-16 could be laid on. Please bear in mind, however, that once we start dealing with STANDEL-16, we shall have to get down to brass tacks. If, for instance, you propose to vest in STANDEL-16 full responsibility for the neutralization of regime-controlled military effectives, he would presumably have to be fitted into the existing KUHOOK structure which may involve the disclosure to him of certain of the assets we now control. All these are specific issues on which we shall require detailed headquarters guidance.

4. As it now stands, K-Program has been considerably reduced in scope from its original concept. For reasons communicated to you in our last pouch, the priming project had to be abandoned. Full responsibility for the development of garrison assets thus rests with CALLIGERIS. We are unfortunately in no position to provide

you with independent clues as to the effectiveness of controls alleged to have been established over garrison staff personnel. We would presume that in a number of instances , commitments made did not go beyond expressing sympathy with the objectives of PBSuccess and a general assurance of support, or at least non-interference. As stated once before, we are practically certain that the momentum of the uprising during its initial phase is bound to determine in what direction the officers' corps will swing. We are inclined to go along with [] estimate of the situation in stressing the overwhelmingly anti-communist sentiment among Guatemala's officers. However, you must bear in mind that officers are bound to be more impressed by tangible manifestations of strength committed according to plan than by pious expressions of dislike for communism. It is for that reason that we have requested you to look into the question of eliciting more forthright expressions of PBPrime determination to see this thing finished once and for all. We would further recommend that you go to the very limit in leaking plausible items of information indicating the scope of our enterprise. While this may stimulate the regime's vigilance, the bracing effect which such disclosures are bound to have upon the anti-communist majority of the Guatemalan populace should not be underrated. Even the White Paper, as you may recall, caused a terrific upsurge of confidence that at least somebody was doing something.

glp